

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
AND
DECISION RECORD**

1792A
EA98-02

**ACCESS PROJECT PLAN
for the
LOWER LAKE CREEK SRMA
EA OR090-98-02**

USDI, Bureau of Land Management, Eugene District

FONSI:

The Bureau of Land Management, Eugene District, has analyzed a proposal for implementing an access project plan for the Lower Lake Creek Special Recreational Management Area (SRMA). This access project plan addresses 5 major issues identified in the Lower Lake Creek Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA): visitor safety, health hazards, recreational opportunities, facilities, visitor orientation, and information.

The purpose of this access project plan is to obtain safe access to the scenic falls and Watchable Wildlife sites. The primary objectives are to improve and/or reduce the fundamental problems of visitor safety and health hazards. The secondary objectives are to enhance recreational opportunities and interpretation experiences within the SRMA. The access plan includes 2 developed areas. The upper area will provide sanitation and a pedestrian boardwalk as well as reopen the parking lot. The lower area will provide a new day-use site, a disabled accessible fish viewing area, footbridge, interpretative signs, shelter area, and hiking trails. Emphasis will be to develop the upper facilities first.

The access project plan area is one mile south of Triangle Lake, along Highway 36, and within Lake and Fish Creek Basins. It is located in T. 16 S., R. 7 W., Sections 19, 20, and 30, Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

On the basis of the information contained in EA-98-02 and all other information available to me as summarized above, it is the determination of the Bureau of Land Management that the April 1999 Access Project Plan will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 1994), and the Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (June 1995), with which this EA is in conformance, and does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a supplement to the existing EIS is not necessary and will not be prepared.

DECISION:

Based on the information described in the access project plan, the analysis documented in its attached EA OR090-98-02 and the FONSI, it is my decision to select the Proposed Action. Emphasis will be to develop the upper facilities first with the funding we currently have, and the lower area when funding becomes available.

The No Action Alternative was not selected because of the obvious unsolved problems of public safety and health issues. Continuing at status quo is not responsive to the critical needs and issues identified within the SRMA.

DECISION RATIONALE:

All protective measures and standard operating procedures identified in EA OR090-98-02 will be implemented to mitigate any potential adverse impacts. The access project plan has addressed the SRMA's objectives of improving health issues, visitor safety, and access issues. The Proposed Action is tiered to and is in compliance with the Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendments to Forest Service and

Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 1994), and the Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (June 1995).

Consultation and Coordination:

This proposed project was judged to be "No Affect" on Federally listed terrestrial vertebrate species. The bald eagle, marbled murrelet, and the northern spotted owl are 3 such species known or suspected to be present, at times, in the vicinity. Noise from construction would be a temporary disturbance and would be overshadowed by the continuous noise of the adjacent State Highway 36 and groups of people who regularly frequent the area. Construction of the facilities may require the felling of several small hardwood trees if they present a safety hazard. Consequently, no suitable habitat for the above mentioned species would be removed. In addition, the removal of hazard trees would not reduce the red tree vole habitat below the 40% threshold considered adequate for this species, as 56% (well above the minimum threshold) of the forested acres within the watershed is considered suitable habitat for this species.

The Proposed Action has been submitted to NMFS for consultation under the Endangered Species Act for the federally listed coastal coho salmon. Work will proceed only after completion of formal consultation.

On April 28, 1999, an EA and Preliminary FONSI were sent to the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians. No responses were received.

Public Comments:

EA OR090-98-02 and its Preliminary FONSI were advertised in the Eugene Register-Guard on April 28, 1999 as available for a 30-day public review period. Copies of the EA and Preliminary FONSI were mailed to interested individuals on the BLM's mailing list. Three letters were sent in favor of the plan, 3 phone calls were received with 2 in favor, and one dissent to the reopening of the parking lot. After some discussion, the caller was advised to address her group's views in a letter to the Field Manager so BLM could formally respond to their concerns. The letter was never received.

signed by: Diane Chung, Field Manager
Coast Range Resource Area

Date: 6/9/99